

Washington DC
Veterans Affairs Medical Center
2014 Annual Report



Veterans at the Forefront



A Message From The Director



VA Core Values:

Integrity Commitment
Advocacy Respect Excellence

The Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center's multidisciplinary team continues to demonstrate its commitment to caring for all Veterans. I am extremely proud of our more than 3,100 staff and volunteers, and of all we have achieved in the past year. As I review the numerous accomplishments, it's evident that we work as a team with Veterans at the forefront -- engaging to enhance and expand our culture into a health care realm of service and operational excellence.

With more than one million patient encounters in 2014, we have made major strides to upgrade the infrastructure of the facility, to renovate patient and staff work areas as well as expand clinical and treatment areas, improving the patient and family experience. We spent a considerable amount of time listening to and considering the feedback of Veterans and our community stakeholders who participated in town hall meetings and open door sessions, and we are implementing some of the suggestions. To further improve customer service and communications, Veterans will soon be greeted by the "Capitol Excellence Ambassadors".

Our shared goals and dedication, along with key community partnerships, have brought a bounty of resources to Veterans and their families through outreach efforts such as the Winterhaven Homeless Stand Down, Welcome Home, Ladies' Night and Music Therapy in the Park. From our five community-based outpatient clinics throughout DC, Maryland and Virginia as well as the Community Resource and Referral Center, together we are treating the whole Veteran, mind, body and spirit, utilizing state-of-the-art technology, integrated health and wellness programs and mobile health services.

It is my privilege to share this 2014 Annual Report.

Brian A. Hawkins, MHA
Medical Center Director

Veterans at the Forefront

Brian A. Hawkins
Army National Guard 1990–1998



"Joining the Illinois Army National Guard offered me a pathway to higher education and afforded me the opportunity to gain leadership skills that I still employ today. When entering into my VA office, I am reminded that military service is a family tradition. I preserve the respect for my grandfather's service by prominently displaying the flag that honored his service."

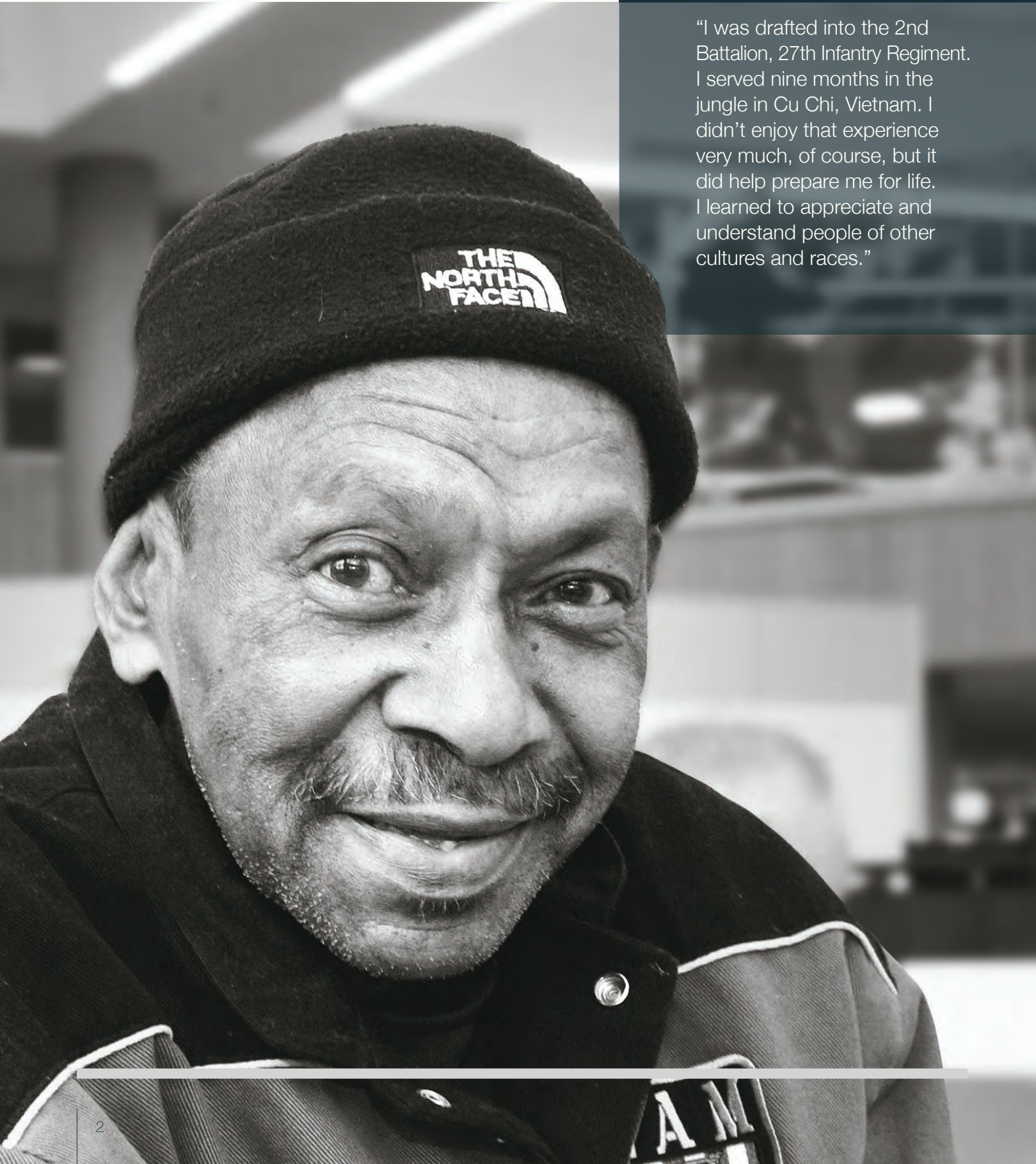




Veterans at the Forefront

Charles Lucas
U.S. Army 1967–1971

“I was drafted into the 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment. I served nine months in the jungle in Cu Chi, Vietnam. I didn’t enjoy that experience very much, of course, but it did help prepare me for life. I learned to appreciate and understand people of other cultures and races.”



A Positive Culture of Service

Employees and Veterans Unite Through Diversity

The medical center’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion has distinguished itself as a leader in its field. This year the office was recognized with three major awards: The Secretary’s Annual Alternative Dispute Resolution Award; the Best in Class by the American Hospital Association as well as a leader in LGBT Health Care Equality.

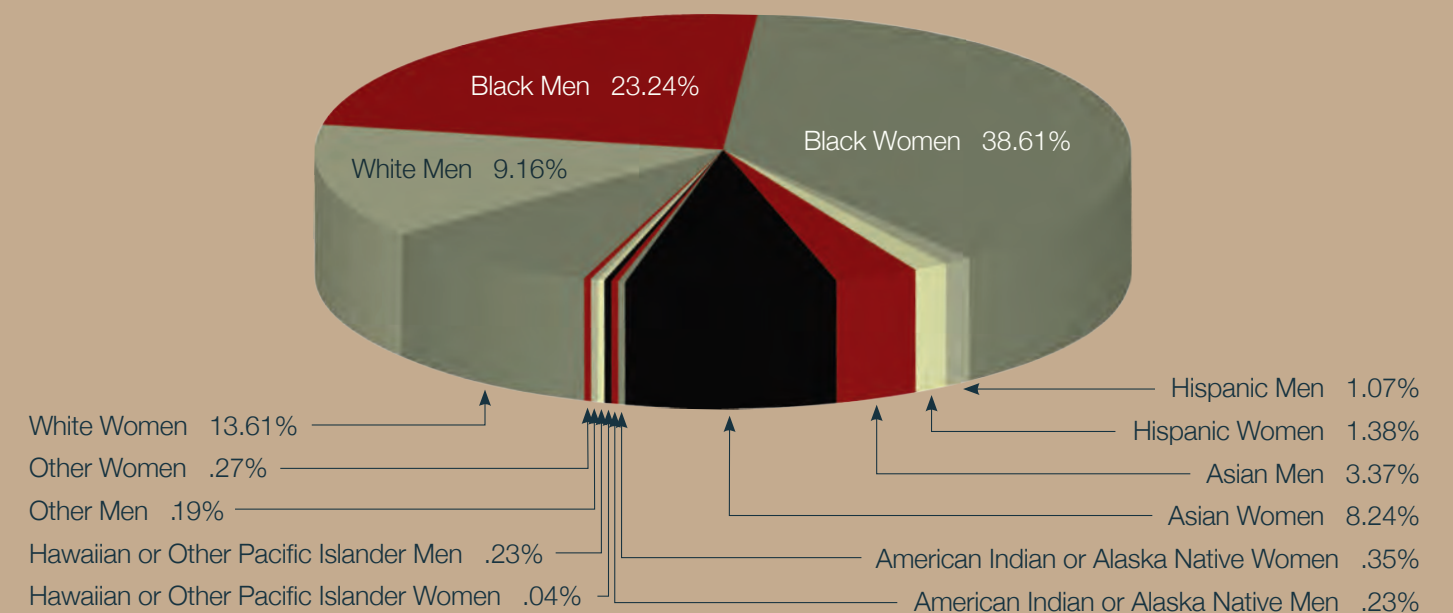
The team has been instrumental in fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment that ensures equal opportunity and embraces the uniqueness of the 26 nationalities represented by our workforce.

In October, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion hosted its 4th Annual Diversity Day. The event began in the medical center’s Atrium with a flag parade and continued outside with music by the U.S. Army Brass Quintet and Veteran guitarists. Informational booths were staffed by employees representing many special emphasis groups such as LGBT along with community partners including Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind and Dress for Success.

Health Care Beyond the Medical Center

Home Based Primary Care (HBPC) has grown to include 300 Veterans including 70 who live in rural areas of southern Maryland, such as Charlotte Hall. HBPC is a unique home care program that provides primary care visits at the Veteran’s home as well as care management and coordination. Veterans have the opportunity to receive visits from a host of therapists and specialists including: physical, occupational, speech, nutrition, mental health and more.

Washington DC VA Medical Center 2014 Employee Demographics





Vets Serving Vets

Many Capitol Excellence team members are Veterans themselves and many more are the sons, daughters, spouses, sisters and brothers of Veterans. So, we are especially honored to be able to provide Veterans the best possible service and the highest quality health care and to treat every Veteran like they are part of the family. In 2014, the Office of Public Affairs launched its Veterans Serving Veterans campaign to make it easier for Veterans to get to know Veteran employees. Veteran employees received hang tags representing their branch of service as well as participated in videos and photo sessions that were shared on social media, the website as well as internal message boards.



Office of Public Affairs

The medical center's award-winning Public Affairs team may be small but it is prolific and dynamic. In 2014, the team wielded more than 25 media queries from around the world including: The Wall Street Journal, CNN, CBS News, TVE (Television of Spain), KSA2 Saudi Arabia, the NBC News Channel and many more. The office members are responsible for all internal and external communications including the quarterly magazine, Healthier Veterans News, the websites, in-house digital and electronic messaging, as well as spearheading major outreach events such as the NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo and Music in the Park at Sylvan Theater on the National Mall. They also engage Veterans and the public using social media formats. The medical center's Facebook page is number one in "Likes" among all VA medical centers nationwide and it's Twitter account ranks 3rd among all VA hospitals which have a Twitter account.

President Obama Fulfills a Dream

In October, Ms. Alyce Dixon, 107-year-old WWII Veteran and the oldest resident in our Community Living Center, had one of her dreams come true—to meet President Barack Obama in the Oval Office. She was personally escorted by DC Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton.



A CULTURE OF SERVICE

Preparing for Potential Outbreaks

At the onset of the Ebola outbreak, Infectious Disease Service jumped into action. The team of experts hosted six town hall forums and made fact sheets, brochures, informational videos and training sessions readily available for all staff members.

At the height of the outbreak, the Emergency Command Center was activated and the multidisciplinary team took immediate and aggressive actions to enhance the personal protective equipment (PPE) program. The Emergency Department implemented a new protocol using mobile devices to communicate with Veterans suspected of having an infectious disease. The new PPE and protocols better protect health care workers and patients from potential Ebola exposure.

Cancer Survivor Day

Oncology Service rolled out the red carpet for Veterans living with cancer and those who beat it during our first Cancer Survivor Day, June 6. The celebration of life and hope offered Veterans an opportunity to engage and share their experiences. Guest speaker Mr. Calvin Snowden, president of the, NFL Former Players' Association, shared his story of courage and survivorship.



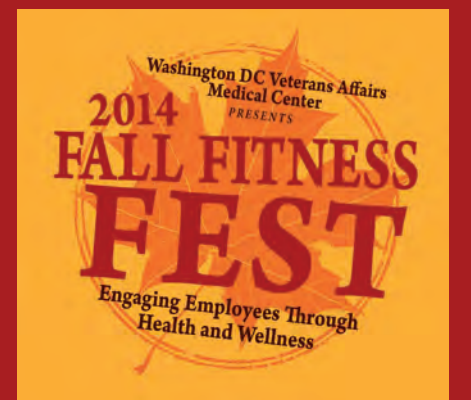
Dr. Raya Kheirbek, Deputy Chief of Staff, Washington DC VA Medical Center, greets a Veteran cancer survivor during the "Day of Hope" Cancer Survivors Day event

Formalizing Excellence Through Communication

In September the medical center began its Veterans and Community Stakeholders' Quarterly Town Halls. The open-forum meetings have yielded valuable feedback and suggestions from Veterans, which have helped to enhance services. In December, the medical center director and the Office of Public Affairs hosted its first Virtual Town Hall to accommodate those unable to attend in person.

Health and Wellness Initiative for Staff

The medical center staff welcomed autumn and celebrated health and wellness with a Fall Fitness Fest Employee Appreciation Day. The Leadership Team expressed their gratitude to staff by hosting an outdoor event to enjoy the crisp weather, healthy food samplings, engaging activities and fitness and dance demonstrations. Relaxation and wellness were not excluded as staff delighted in seated massages by CareFirst and received blood pressure assessments by the American Heart Association.



Operational Effectiveness and Accountability



Expanded Care for Women Veterans

Women Veterans are the fastest growing population of Veterans and to address their gender-specific health care needs, the medical center opened its new Women's Health Clinic. The clinic boasts more than 7,800 square feet of treatment space, offering an inviting environment with six exam rooms, two procedure rooms, a meditation and alternative therapies treatment area, a conference room and a serene waiting area with computer access as well as on-site mammography.



Improving the Patient Experience

To expand clinical care areas, the medical center relocated Human Resource Management Service and Fiscal Service to a newly constructed 14,000 square foot administration building. From the outside in, infrastructure upgrades like replacing the 50 year-old air handlers are improving efficiency and comfort. The environment of care has been transformed with new public restrooms, new privacy walls in the Emergency Department and an expanded and renovated Outpatient Lab. Additionally, an extensive atrium renovation has improved the environmental temperatures, reduced the "echo" effect and made room for a new café, optical shop and office spaces for eligibility and enrollment.



Transformed Into a New Inpatient Treatment Area

The 4C wing, which once housed administrative offices, has been transformed into a new inpatient wing. The newly transformed unit boasts 29 private rooms complete with desk space, Wi-Fi, the Get Well Network, and convertible chair beds so family members may take a more active role in the Veteran's recuperation process.

Veterans at the Forefront

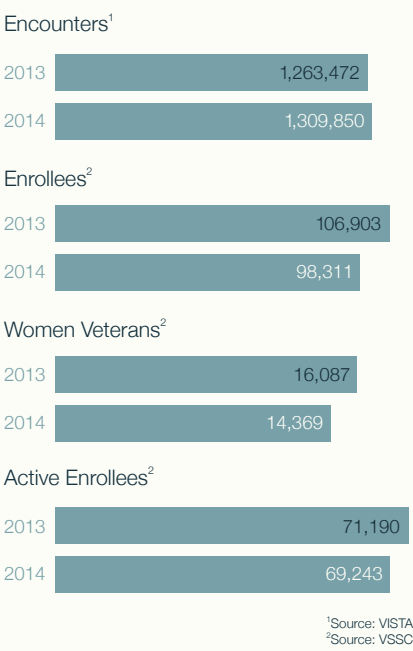
April Goodwin
U.S. Army 1982 – 1989

"I liked being able to serve my country. The military taught me how to be a good employee and how to be a better all-around person. I'm involved in Recreation Therapy's art program. It has helped me overcome a lot of challenges. It gives me a place to leave my troubles outside the door, and get absorbed into the art, at least for a little while."



FY 14 Statistics

Health Care for Veterans



Capital Asset Expenditures

Furnishings	\$798,037
Equipment	\$8,710,760
NRM Construction	\$6,720,855
Minor Construction	\$1,460,669

Total Revenues

Reimbursements	\$1,338,735
Medical Care Cost Recovery	\$28,516,926
Medical Care Appropriations	\$461,727,631

\$491,583,292



Total Expenditures

Capital Asset Expenditures	\$17,438,868
Supplies and Services	\$191,894,600
Salaries	\$282,249,824
Employees	2,373



The Gold Seal of Approval

The medical center’s practices and performances were evaluated in 2014 by both internal and external auditing agencies. The Joint Commission has fully accredited the medical center’s Hospital, Behavioral Health, Community Living Center and Home Care programs. The medical center earned the “Gold Seal of Approval,” which is awarded to an organization that is committed to delivering quality health care.



The Office of Inspector General’s Combined Assessment Program evaluated how well we provide access to medical care and services as well as determined how well leadership ensures compliance with VA regulations, directives and internal policies. The Capitol Excellence team performed well in all areas, especially the Stroke Program and the Community Living Center.

Voluntary Service

Volunteers on Rolls End of Period	764
Total Volunteer Hours	76,276
Monetary Donations	\$112,117.45
Activity Donations	\$29,673.80
Item Donations	\$504,370.13
Total Donations	\$646,161.38
Volunteer Hourly Value <small>76,276 @ \$22.55 per hour as per Dept. of Labor</small>	\$1,720,023.80
Total Resource Impact	\$2,366,185.18

The medical center’s Voluntary Service promotes charitable giving through corporate and individual sponsorships; and offers community partners the opportunity to enhance Veterans’ health care experiences and make a positive impact.

Healthcare Innovations

New Onsite Mammography and Radiology Renovations

The staff of the Washington DC VA Medical Center is committed to providing women Veterans with the right care, in the right place, at the right time with state-of-the-art equipment and technology. On October 7, this goal became a little easier with the opening of the Women's Health Clinic's new Mammography Suite. Women Veterans are now offered 2-D (conventional) and 3-D (Tomosynthesis –problem solving) X-ray mammography.

Women Veterans are the fastest growing Veteran population. The Women's Health Care Program ensures women Veterans access to timely, equitable, high-quality, and comprehensive health care services in a sensitive and safe environment.

Not only is having onsite mammography convenient and comfortable for women Veterans, but it provides for more timely results. According to Dr. Tahira Ahmed, the Medical Center's new Chief of Mammography, having the services onsite provides women with same-day results. "By the time a patient leaves the Women's Health Clinic, she will know the results of her mammogram," said Dr. Ahmed. The study and results will immediately become part of the patient's electronic health record. Also, by not having to make an appointment and go off-station for the mammogram, busy women may be more likely to comply with their health care provider's breast screening recommendations.

Getting mammograms on a regular basis is an effective way to detect breast cancer in its early stages. Women should speak to their health care providers about risk factors and how often they should have a mammogram. For more information or to schedule a mammogram, call the Women's Health Clinic at 202-745-8582.

Radiology is nearing the completion of its extensive two-year renovation to improve Veterans' access to diagnostic and interventional radiology services. From semi-automatic radiographic rooms to a large bore magnet that allow MRIs to be performed on larger patients and those who experience claustrophobia in the smaller bore magnets.



Women Veterans can now get their mammograms at the medical center's new state-of-the-art Mammography Suite located within the Women's Health Clinic.



Dr. Tahira Ahmed, Chief of Mammography, discusses the results of a mammogram with a women Veteran.

Veterans at the Forefront

Shepherd Martin
U.S. Navy 1974 – 1992

"I served in the Medical Service Corps. My military service offered opportunities to do a variety of exciting and important jobs. Also, the medical knowledge I gained comes in handy in my current civilian job and with managing my own diabetes. My service dog Jake is a life-saver, he alerts me when my blood sugar gets too low. "





Virtual Care for Veterans

Medical center's Veteran population receiving some form of virtual care

52%

Patients and VA providers utilizing the secure messaging system

47%

Decrease in VA bed days of care due to Veterans enrolled in home telehealth for non-institutional care needs and chronic care management

54%

Decrease in VA hospital admissions due to Veterans enrolled in home telehealth for non-institutional care needs and chronic care management

32%

Decrease in VA bed days of care due to mental health services provided to Veterans via clinical video telehealth

35%

New Medical Technologies

The Washington DC VA Medical Center continues to be a leader in digital health technology. In 2014, the medical center was at the forefront of several mobile health projects dedicated to providing increased access to VA health care resources for Veterans and their caregivers. Employing new technologies enhance the efficiency of VA health care team members.

Moving forward, VA will be launching a variety of mobile applications and mobile-optimized web sites to assist Veterans with accessing their information and communicating with their health care providers while on-the-go. Among other projects getting underway is a text-messaging-based communications outreach to Veterans.

My HealtheVet

My HealtheVet's secure messaging program is a web-based system that allows participating Veterans and VA health care teams to communicate non-urgent, health-related information safely and privately.

Through its aggressive outreach program and its robust initiatives to educate Veterans on the use of secure messaging, (performance measure chart) the medical center led the nation for secure messaging enrollments in FY 14 with 47 percent of patients and VA providers utilizing the secure messaging system.

Telehealth

In 2014, more than 52 percent of the medical center's Veteran population received some form of virtual care including: clinical video telehealth, home telehealth, eConsults and secure messaging. Telehealth not only improves Veterans' convenience and communication with providers, it saves money and keeps Veterans healthier and out of the hospital. Veterans enrolled in home telehealth for non-institutional care needs and chronic care management had a 54 percent decrease in VA bed days of care and a 32 percent decrease in VA hospital admissions. Mental health services provided to Veterans via clinical video telehealth were found to reduce hospital bed days by as much as 35 percent. For each Veteran enrolled in home telehealth for a year, the cost reduction is estimated to be about \$2,000.

Research

The medical center's Research and Development Program incorporates laboratory, translational, clinical, and epidemiological studies to address multiple medical conditions, from HIV/AIDS, TB, hyper-tension, diabetes mellitus, and heart disease to TBI, PTSD, alcoholism, substance abuse and mental health. There are approximately 300 active projects being conducted by more than 90 principal investigators and their teams, with about \$25-26 million annual grant funding from all VA, federal, non-VA and other sources.

Quality Care in a Safe Environment

From greeting at the door to 24/7 patrol of the grounds, our 42-member Police Service helps keep Veterans, visitors and staff safe. This year, a number of measures have been added to improve the medical center's physical security including: a license plate recognition system which alerts police service of hot-listed vehicles; facial recognition software and a K-9 officer trained for explosive and illegal drug detection.

Mohs Surgery

The medical center's new Mohs Surgery suite provides Veterans access to the latest microsurgery techniques for removing skin cancer. The highly-specialized surgeon removes cancerous tissue one layer at a time, examining each piece under a microscope while the patient, on a local anesthetic, waits. The examination informs the doctor's decision for additional tissue removal while preserving the surrounding healthy tissue. The Mohs procedure is especially used where tissue preservation is important.

The Get Well Network

The medical center introduced the Get Well Network to entertain, educate, and empower patients and family members to be more engaged via the inpatients' bedside televisions. The easy-to-use touch screen allows Veterans the opportunity to watch TV, movies, and educational health videos, as well as play video games, order meals, and access the Internet and email. Nursing can use it to launch care and discharge plans to better prepare the Veteran and family for after care.





Veterans at the Forefront

Michael Hall
U.S. Army 2001–2004

"I was a paratrooper with 13th Bravo. The military taught me a lot about discipline and being faithful to a cause and learning to support my coworkers. I miss the friendships and the sense of camaraderie I had in the Army."



Outreach and Community Engagement



Throughout the year, the medical center's outreach team established opportunities to interact with Veterans in their neighborhoods. By partnering with other organizations, we expand our reach to Veterans who have not yet taken advantage of VA health care services.

Music Therapy in the Park

The Sylvan Theater, located on the grounds of the Washington Monument, became a therapeutic music venue during the summer months. Music Therapy in the Park, a collaborative effort between the medical center, the National Park Service, and Howard University Radio brought the community together to showcase the talents of Veterans from the medical center's Community Living Center and the Recreation Therapy program. The monthly mini-concert series provided a beneficial outlet for Veterans and staff to engage with the community.





Welcome Home

During the Maryland Renaissance Festival, September 6, the medical center's outreach team and 23 community organizations joined forces to welcome home Veterans and their families. More than 150 newly-enrolled Veterans from Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn learned about VA health care and community resources. In honor of their service, funds were donated in order to treat Veterans and their family members to free admission and lunch.

NBC 4 – Health and Fitness Expo

During one of the country's largest health and fitness expos, the medical center's outreach team and representatives from VBA partnered to introduce Veterans to VA health care, benefits and the claims process. At this year's NBC4 Health and Fitness Expo, more than 25 Veterans enrolled for VA care, hundreds received blood pressure checks and glucose screens as well as healthy meal tips.

Sunday Magazine Radio Show

The Office of Public Affairs' Veterans and Community Health Sunday Magazine Radio Show offers listeners weekly one-half hour health and wellness round-table discussions on WMAL 105.9 FM and AM 630. The programs feature physicians, surgeons, psychologists, nurses, Veterans and various subject-matter experts from community organizations. Tune in at 5 a.m. on Sundays or visit our website to hear archived segments at: www.washingtondc.va.gov

Winterhaven

More than 70 local, state, federal and community organizations came together in January to help homeless, at-risk and under-employed Veterans at the Winterhaven Homeless Veterans Stand Down. This was the 21st year the medical center has hosted the major outreach event and more than 700 Veterans received help.

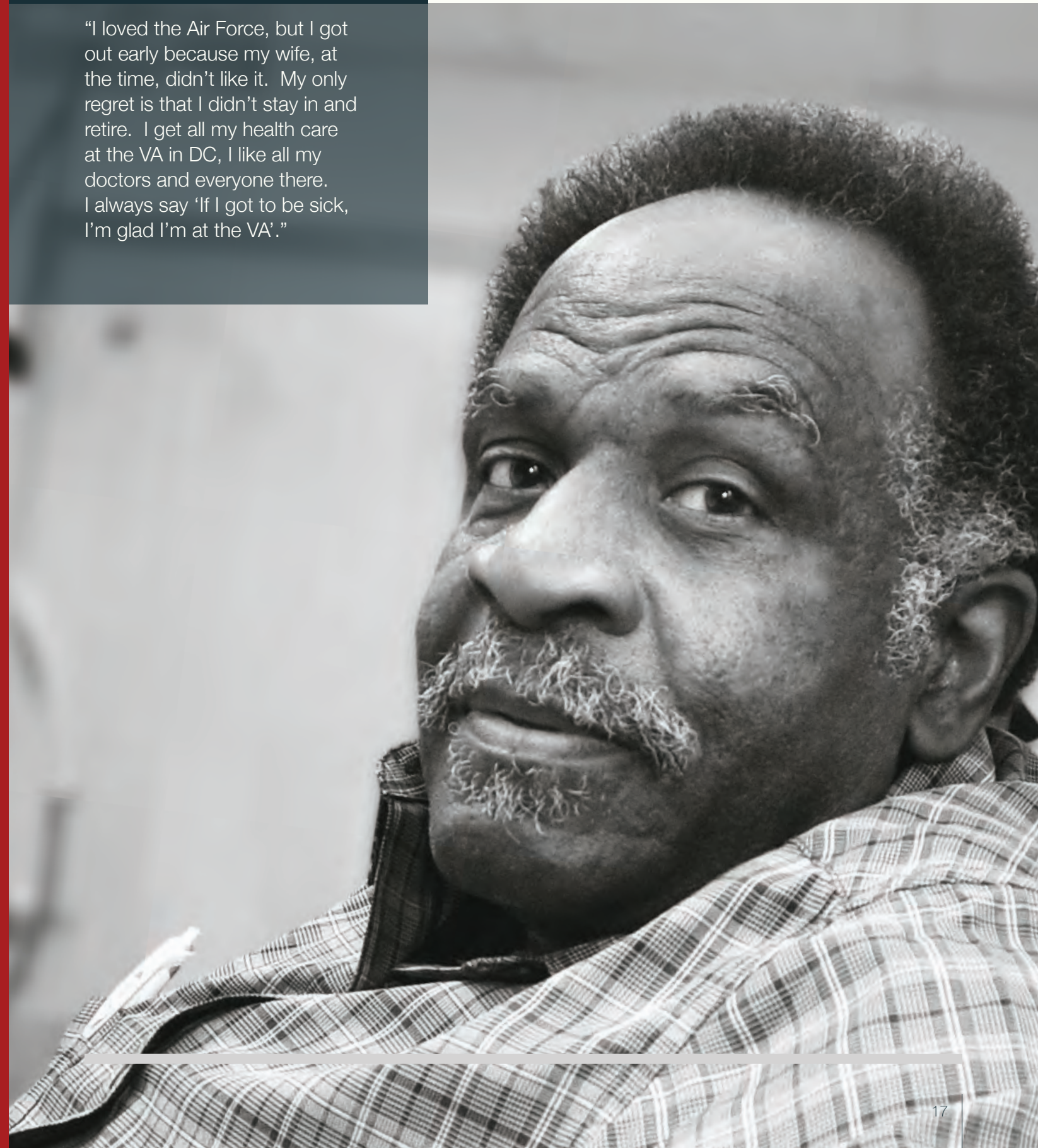
Armed Forces Day

In May, the medical center's outreach team along with Howard University Radio, Boy Scouts of America and the Friends of Fort Hunt Park came together to honor Veterans and military service members on Armed Forces Day at Fort Hunt Park, Alexandria, Va. The family-fun appreciation day was attended by more than 75 Veterans, service members and their families.

Veterans at the Forefront

William R. Kyler
U.S. Air Force 1972 – 1978

"I loved the Air Force, but I got out early because my wife, at the time, didn't like it. My only regret is that I didn't stay in and retire. I get all my health care at the VA in DC, I like all my doctors and everyone there. I always say 'If I got to be sick, I'm glad I'm at the VA'."





Veterans at the Forefront

Arlene Ann Cruz
U.S. Army 1980-1982

"In the Army I was a Multichannel Systems Operator. In the field, we would set up communications and antennas; we were always the first to arrive and the last to leave. My favorite part of being in the military was playing intramural volleyball. I was the only woman on the team, I was a really good spiker."



Whole Health Care: Mind, Body and Spirit



Mindfulness

In January, the Body-Mind-Spirit Care program and Mental Health Services hosted Congressman Tim Ryan, author of *A Mindful Nation*. The congressman gave a presentation on mindfulness and held a meditation session with Veterans. The medical center's VA PTSD clinic was the first in the country to have a Body-Mind-Spirit Care program fully integrated into its system of care.

The clinic offers services customized for Veterans with PTSD including classes such as: Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, Relaxation Therapy, Yoga, Heartmath Biofeedback, and iRest Yoga Nidra.

Relationship Retreat: Warrior to Soul Mate

The Warrior to Soul Mate Relationship Retreats, facilitated by Chaplain Service, helps Veterans and their significant others develop effective communication skills, gain emotional wisdom, and rebuild their relationships. The all-expenses paid weekend retreats at a local hotel have been very successful with helping couples reclaim their relationships after deployment. During 2014, Chaplain Service hosted 18 retreats.



Spirituality and the Healing Process

Chaplain Service and the Integrative Health and Wellness Department has introduced and expanded a variety of programs to help Veterans with a number of conditions from PTSD to diabetes. The new programs include weekly spirituality groups which incorporate meditation and song as well as a series of writing workshops facilitated by the Veterans Writing Project.

The workshops, which help Veterans turn their memories into words, have been very popular. In response to Veterans' requests, three different 13-week workshops were added, one in the daytime, one in the evening and one just for women Veterans. Plans are to offer three additional workshops in 2015.

Improve Performance

Leader in Patient Safety, Cornerstone Award

The Patient Safety Office continues to set the standard for patient safety. For five consecutive years, the medical center’s Patient Safety Office has earned the Cornerstone Award, “Gold” standard, as recognized by the National Center for Patient Safety. The award was created in 2008 to recognize leaders in patient safety and to enhance the root cause analysis process.

Quality Health Care with “Top Doctors”

In March, *Washingtonian Magazine* released its distinguished “Top Doctors” list, recognizing three physicians from the Washington DC VA Medical Center: Dr. Elizabeth L. Cobbs, Chief of Geriatrics, Extended Care and Palliative Care; Dr. Frederick Rickles, Hematology; and Dr. Gregory D. Trachiotis, Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery. The annual Top Doctor’s list is the result of asking area physicians who they would recommend to care for their own family members.

Haynes Rice Award for Community Service

Oncology Nurse, Theresa Pinto, RN, BSN, OCN was awarded the Haynes Rice Award for Community Service by the DC Hospital Association (DCHA) for her work improving the lives of Veterans with cancer. She has been instrumental in transforming oncology services for Veterans receiving care nationwide. Her research and collaboration lead to the development of the Cancer Care Education Handbook and shortened medication administration times. She also spearheaded the Cancer Support Group and the medical center’s first Cancer Survivorship Day.

Communications Setting the Standard

The Office of Public Affairs continues to distinguish itself with engaging programs and campaigns. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) recognized the team’s efforts with a third place award in the Innovation category for its formalized social media campaigns.

AMVETS Rehabilitation Award of the Year

Stacey Childs, was awarded the “Rehabilitation Award of the Year” by AMVETS-Dept. of Washington, DC. Ms. Childs serves as the Manager of Fisher House, and her work improves the lives of wounded and ill Veterans and their family members.

Regional GEM Award-Nurse.com

Oncology Nurse Theresa Pinto, RN, BSN, OCN, was recognized with a Nursing Excellence GEM (Giving Excellence Meaning) Regional Award for her extraordinary contributions to Veterans living with cancer. The award is presented by Nurse.com

Gerontological Nursing Excellence

LPN Babatunde Alegbeleye was recognized by the National Gerontological Nursing Association. His commitment to caring for aging Veterans earned him the Gerontological Nursing Excellence Award in the LPN/LVN category.

APPE Administrative Preceptor of the Year

Emergency Pharmacy and Infectious Diseases Clinical Pharmacy Specialist, Ivan Cephas, PharmD., was recognized by the Howard University College of Pharmacy. He was named the Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) Administrative Preceptor of the Year (2013-2014) for his commitment to excellence in pharmacy practices.

Presidential Award for Excellence in Education

The American Academy of Pain Medicine (AAPM) recognized leading back pain specialist, Washington DC VA Medical Center Neurologist, Dr. Beth Murinson, with the “Presidential Award for Excellence in Education.” Each year, the foundation recognizes a health professional who has made major contributions in pain management education.

Secretary’s Annual Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Award

The staff of the medical center’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion was recognized with the Secretary’s ADR Award in the workplace category. This is the highest recognition VA gives to those who create an environment where innovative ADR techniques are used to effectively address conflicts and resolve disputes in a manner that encourages understanding and problem solving in the workplace.

A Culture of Diversity and Inclusion

The medical center was recognized by the American Hospital Association’s Institute for Diversity in Health Management as “Best in Class” in two categories: Addressing Disparities and Delivering Quality Care and Diversity Management and Strengthening the Workforce.

Leader in LGBT Healthcare Equality

For the second consecutive year, the medical center was selected as a “Leader in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Healthcare Equality” by the Human Rights Campaign. The medical center’s multidisciplinary team promotes equitable and inclusive healthcare for LGBT patients and their family members.

Exceptional Leadership in Information Technology

Dr. Neil Evans, Co-Director of Connected Health for VHA and the Associate Chief of Staff for Informatics, was named a “Most Inspiring Up and Comer” by FedScoop news source. The award recognizes young Information Technology (IT) rising stars who are showing exceptional leadership and vision in the world of IT.

AMVETS Civil Servant of the Year

Zina Smith of Voluntary Service was named the “Civil Servant of the Year” by the AMVETS-Dept. of Washington, DC for her support of Veterans and Veteran Service Organizations.

AWARDS



Empowering Health and Wellness: New Veterans Teaching Kitchen

With the opening of Nutrition and Food Service’s new Healthy Teaching Kitchen classroom and the mobile demonstration station, Veterans are being empowered to live healthy lifestyles. Registered dietitians help Veterans prepare recipes using fresh vegetables, lean proteins and healthy fats. The mobile demonstrations bring healthy cooking lessons to Veterans throughout the medical center and at community outreach events. The recipes used are placed online and on social media to show Veterans that cooking healthy need not be complicated.

Dignitary Visits & Outreach

The Electronic Health Record has made the Washington DC VA Medical Center the area’s hub for foreign healthcare interests. Delegations from the United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, the Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and China, just to name a few, have visited the medical center to observe our use of the electronic medical record, tele-health and the VA’s Integrated Health Care model as a whole.

Health Care and more for Homeless and at-risk Veterans

The Community Resource and Referral Center’s (CRRC) team has taken a proactive stand to end Veteran homelessness. The team has expanded its scope to include medical and psychiatric care, housing with case management, on-site job training, educational and legal aid services. The outreach team includes a physician, a psychiatric nurse practitioner and a social worker, who regularly visits homeless Veterans wherever they are -- at shelters, in wooded areas and under bridges to provide basic health care and to encourage Veterans to visit the 24-hour resources center. In FY 14, the CRRC had 42,000 encounters and since 2008 has helped 1,291 Veterans obtain permanent housing through its partnership with the Department of Housing and Urban Development through the HUD/VASH voucher program. The CRRC staff also partners with several community organizations that provide a variety of resources to Veterans and their family members.

Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center

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